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CURRENT LITERATURE

BOOK REVIEWS

The Wiesner Festschrift

As a testimonial of esteem and affection, the friends and pupils of JULIUS WIESNER, the distinguished director of the plant-physiological institute of the University of Vienna, prepared for his seventieth birthday (January 20, 1908) a volume[1] containing more than forty papers, which are of course predominantly physiological. Only one is from this country: TRELEASE gives an account of variegation in the Agaveae, with many illustrations. It is only possible to give an idea of the scientific contents by stating most briefly the drift of each paper.

TSCHIRCH opens the volume with a brief sketch of some ideas on the relationships and origins of the resins and gums, as to whose chemistry light is breaking. MOLISCH shows that *Xylaria Hypoxylon*, *X. Cookei*, *Trametes Pini*, *Polyporus sulfureus*, and *Collybia cirrhata* are to be stricken from the list of luminous fungi. STRASBURGER discusses nuclear division in the Characeae, with special reference to the so-called amitosis, which he holds is not a senile process. VON HOHNEL and LITSCHAUER present a synopsis of Austrian Corticeae, including 131 species, of which 5 are new. MÖBIUS figures and describes the siliceous accretions in the stem and leaf cells of the tropical American *Callisia repens* (Commelinaceae). CZAPEK discusses the relation of geotropism to certain features of plant form, especially to the position of branches both of stems and roots. BURGERSTEIN gives a synoptical key to the genera of Coniferae, based on the anatomical characters of the wood. VON PORTHEIM and SAMEC report less dissimilation ("respiration") in seedlings of pea grown in Ca-free solutions than in those grown in Knop's solution. DARWIN shows by various methods that the perceptive region for gravity and light is in the cotyledon of Sorghum, thus disposing of objections that have been raised to this view.

HANAUSEK gives a further account of the "carbon-layer" of the pericarp of certain Compositae. GOEBEL finds the relations of symmetry in a considerable number of flowers and inflorescences examined to be explicable neither by pressure nor purpose, but rather by "nutritive relations" (not more exactly analyzed). RICHTER declares (on results derived from the usual but inconclusive culture methods) that calcium is a necessary food element for a colorless diatom, probably *Nitschia putrida*. SENFT demonstrates the occurrence of physcion and parietin in lichens, and the methods of recognizing them microchemically.

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[1] WIESNER-FESTSCHRIFT. Ed. by K. LINSBAUER. 8vo. pp. viii+548. *pls. 23. figs. 56.* Wien: Verlagsbuchhandlung Carl Konegen. 1908. *Kr.* 24, geb. 28.80.

Ambronn indicates the chemical and physical alterations which the cellulose of textile fibers undergoes when impregnated with zinc sulfid. Nestler has extended MacDougal's studies on the skin poison of *Cypripedium spectabile* secreted by the glandular hairs. Němec writes briefly on his experiments upon regeneration with the roots of Taraxacum. Stoklasa declares unequivocally that in anaerobic and in aerobic respiration the formation of lactic acid, alcohol, and CO_2 (and in addition acetic and formic acids in aerobic respiration) is due solely to enzymes. Kammerer describes a case of symbiosis between *Oedogonium undulatum* and aquatic larvae of *Aeschna cyanea.* Grafe furnishes an appropriate study of the gum-ferment whose action Wiesner first correctly described.

Heinricher adds to his two previous papers on the effect of light upon germination of seeds a general discussion of the subject, with some new experiments and a valuable summary. Mikosch finds that the scion of Epiphyllum grafted upon Peireskia as a stock, exercises a definite effect in giving rise in its cells to the bodies peculiar to Epiphyllum. Figdor reports exact determinations of the phototropic sensitiveness of certain plants in relation to the zone of indifference (which seems not to exist in some). Koorders again describes and figures his Javanese genus *Wiesneromyces.* Zikes has a further account of his *Bacterium polychromicum* and its pigment production. Von Wettstein observed a saltatory rise of the fertility (at first small or none) of the pollen in two undoubted bastards of Sempervivum, and suggests that here may be an important factor in the origin of new forms. Von Weinzirl contributes data on the mechanical functions of the various organs of the embryo of cereals in their escape from investing structures. K. Linsbauer reports propagation of the excitation in the primary petiole of Mimosa at a rate of $100^{\text{mm-sec}}$, and a reaction time averaging 0.09 to 0.35^{sec}, with minimum 0.07 and maximum 0.80^{sec}.

Fritsch describes cystoliths of *Klugia zeylanica.* Raciborski recognizes in *Coreopsis tinctoria prolifica* "an undoubted mutation." L. Linsbauer gives an account of "photochemical induction" in the formation of anthocyan in the etiolated seedlings of buckwheat. Krasser makes a critical synopsis of the lower Lias flora of the Austrian Alps. Schiffner presents an ecological study of so-called *Knieholzwiesen* of the Iser Mountains. Wegschneider states that the fats are really saponified by stages and the reaction is only apparently bimolecular. Skraup writes briefly on the leucin of proteins. Strohmer gives an account of the accumulation and migration of saccharose in the sugar beet. Karzel shows some interesting peculiarities in the lignification and cutinization of the walls of the stomata in cycads. Przibram notes the renewed growth from stumps of red wood, familiar to Californians. Wilhelm figures a remarkable distortion of the tips of a fir. Lopriore writes on twin-roots in Zea and Vicia.

Besides the papers listed, there are several on more general topics, historical or philosophical, that are omitted for lack of space. The volume is a worthy memorial and gives evidence of the inspirational force of a great investigator.—C. R. B.